3ʳᵈ Heavy Brigade Combat Team
Task Force Band of Brothers
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Tip helps apprehended four suspected insurgents

by Sgt. Zach Mott
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BALAD, Iraq (Feb. 16, 2006) -- Acting on tips, Iraqi army and Coalition Forces conducted three separate raids in the town of Balad, Iraq, and apprehended four suspected insurgents in the process.

"We were given intelligence that there was a somewhat high-level insurgent that was going to meet in that house between 1300 and 1400," said Capt. Keven Beattie, commander, Company B, 1-8 Combined Arms Battalion, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Task Force Band of Brothers. "Given that intelligence, because it was close to the road that we could easily get in there and maneuver on them."

Unfortunately, by the time Coalition Forces arrived, the intended target was no longer at that location.

"As in many cases when we try to do operations up there, early warning -- the person was either not there today or as soon as we started moving up in that area, he fled," Beattie said.

Shortly after this mission, the Iraqi army notified Beattie about another possible insurgent safe-house in the area. Because the tips were provided by Iraqi army sources, Beattie wanted the IA to take the lead in apprehending the suspects.

"We've had a couple good instances where civilians have notified the IA which in turn notified us (about insurgent activity)," He said.

This time, the Iraqi army detained four suspects and took them to the IA detention facility. With the help of interpreters, Beattie and his company are able to assist in these missions. These interpreters also serve a vital role in the missions themselves because they are familiar with the towns and cities of this region.

"Fortunately, we have three interpreters who are from the Balad area. It helps us a lot because they know the area so well," Beattie said. "They know the people and they know where the bad guys tend to hang out."

That familiarity allows the interpreters to inform coalition forces immediately if someone, or something, doesn't belong there.

"(It's) just like back home, we can identify who's not from our neighborhood," Beattie said. "Having interpreters from this area really helps a lot."

An AH-64 Apache flies above a house that was targeted during a joint Iraqi and U.S. Army raid. Sgt. Bryan Tucker, a gunner with Company B, 1-8 Combined Arms Battalion, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Task Force Band of Brothers, scans nearby bushes for signs of an escape by the suspected insurgents. (Photo by Sgt. Zach Mott, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division Public Affairs Office, Feb. 16, 2006)

Staff Sgt. Corey Mills, Company B, 1-8 Combined Arms Battalion, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Task Force Band of Brothers, stands by as a member of the Iraqi army ensures suspected insurgents are waiting questioning. (Photo by Sgt. Zach Mott, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division Public Affairs Office, Feb. 16, 2006)